The Word and The Anointing

Matthew 22:23-33

I. Introduction

I think a good place to begin is by defining the anointing. What do we mean by the term "the anointing"? Simply put, the anointing is the Holy Spirit working *in* and *through* the believer, enabling him both to *walk* like Christ and to carry out the *work* of Christ. In other words, the anointing is the Spirit in action—the power of God at work in and through His church. If I were to slightly modify the topic I have been asked to speak on, *The Word and the Anointing*, I would prefer to state it this way: *The Word and the Spirit*. It is essentially the same thing.

II. What God Has Joined, Let No Man Separate

God has inseparably bound the work of the Holy Spirit to His Word. The Spirit works primarily through the Word of God; the Word is the means of His work.

Do not miss the point: the Holy Spirit, as it were, is "tied to" the Word of God. He will do nothing apart from the Word of God. Therefore, what God has joined together, let no man put asunder.

III. The Different Kinds of Churches and Ministers

There is an interesting comment by a well-known pastor regarding the union of the Word and the Spirit:

> *"I fear a silent divorce has taken place between the Word and the Spirit, between the Scriptures and the power of God. When there is a divorce, some children stay with one parent, some side with the other."*

Because of this unfortunate divorce between the Word and the Spirit, we can almost neatly divide churches into three groups:

i. Those who are limited to the Word—to biblical exposition. They are well conversant with the

Scriptures. They can even detect heresy. All they want to hear and give to people is the Word.

ii. Those who are acquainted with the raw power of God. They have experienced the gifts of the Holy Spirit; they have experienced healings and miracles, signs and wonders. The have indeed done many wonderful works and demonstrated the power of the Spirit. All they want to see is power—to see something happen.

iii. Then they are those who do not *"know the Scriptures nor the power of God*." These are the wants mentioned in the Bible passage we read at the beginning. Look again at **verse 29**: *"Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God."*

The old saying is true:

- *"If you only have the Word, you dry up. If you only have the Spirit, you blow up. If you have both, you grow up."*

- *"All Word and no Spirit, and the people dry up. All Spirit and no Word, and the people blow up. Both Spirit and Word, and the people grow up."*

- **[Let me add]** *A church without the Word and the Spirit is either dead or, at best, fast asleep.*

  No Word + no Spirit = a dead or sleeping church.

IV. The Lord Jesus, Our Model

We must hold equally to both the Word and the Spirit; they are designed to function as one. **God never uses one without the other. God always works through His Word *and* His Spirit.**

In Creation (**Genesis 1**), we see the perfect harmony of the word of God and the Spirit of God: *"And the*

*Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters (**v2**). Then God said…." (**v3**).* **Both are agents of His will**.

Too often, we see churches known for just one thing: they're either all about **deep Bible study** or all about **spiritual experiences**. It shouldn't be an "either-or" situation; we really need both.

Regarding the matter of the Word and Spirit, the Lord Jesus serves as the ultimate model and standard for the Church. In **Luke 24:19,** we are told that He *"was a Prophet mighty in deeds and word before God and all the people."*

Same as the early church—they stood strong in doctrine and in the power of the Lord. **And so must we**.

> **1 Thess 1:5 NKJV**
>
> For our gospel did not come to you **in word only, but also in power**, and in the Holy Spirit and in

much assurance, as you know what kind of men we were among you for your sake.

1 Cor 2:4-5 NKJV

4 And my speech and my preaching *were* not with persuasive words of human* wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, **5** that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.

Question: What is more vital for today's church: the accuracy of our doctrine or the demonstration of spiritual power?

Let me answer with a question: When you're at 35,000 feet, tell me: which engine would you rather do without—left or right engine? None! Because if anyone should stop working the plane will crash.

The Word and the Spirit are both vital for the church. **In every act, God weaves them together to carry out His divine intentions. We need both, not one or the other.**

V. How to Obtain Power

a. **Personal reading of the Scriptures** (**Matt. 22:31**). Notice that after the Lord Jesus pointed out bluntly to these Sadducees that they were in error because of their ignorance of the Scriptures and the power of God (**v22**), in **verse** 31, He asks a them a question (a rhetorical question), *"But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying…"*

What is the point? Had they read the Scriptures, God's word to them, this would not have been their condition.

But notice that the kind of reading the Lord Jesus had in mind necessitates taking two factors into account:

i. That the Bible is God's word— *"what was spoken…**by God**…"*

ii. That God's word is spoken directly to us; it is meant for us. That is, that what God has spoken is personally addressed to us for our own lives— *"what was spoken **to you**…"*

Question: Could it be that the main reason we're not seeing more signs and wonders today is because we're more interested in the signs and words themselves than we are in the written word?

Note: The enemy of God's Word in our hearts—**Mark 4:19**

b. **Personal and corporate prayer** (**Acts 13:1-3; 6:4; 4:24-30**).

c. **Preach the Word** (**Mark 16:20**). Preach truth; preach what God says in the Bible. Speak God's Word exactly as it is written. As you preach this truth, the Holy Spirit partners with you, bringing forth the anointing.

d. **Practice personal holiness** (**2 Timothy 2:21; 2 Cor. 4:1-2**)

e. **Persistent faith** (**Galatians 3:5 NKJV and NLT**).

Conclusion:

Let's pray and hope and labour for the day when those who will come to see will hear and those who come to hear will see.

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